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· NO FETTERS IN THE BAY STAT ·

S P E E C H

OF

WM. LLOYD GARRISON,

BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL RELATIONS,

In support of the petitions asking for a Law to
prevent the

RECAPTURE OF FUGITIVE SLAVES,

THURSDAY, FEB. 24, 1859.

PHONOGRAPHIC REPORT BY JAS. M. W. YERRINTON.

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ANTI-SLAVERY

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S P E E C H .

MR. CHAIRMAN, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE COMMITTEE :

I do not rise to define my position. I am an Abolitionist ; and therefore for the abolition of slavery in Carolina, and for the abolition of slave-hunting in the old Bay State, now and forever. (Applause.)

When, a week ago to-day, you kindly consented to give another hearing on this occasion, I took it for granted it was not because your minds were not made up on this question in the right direction, but only as an act of courtesy to the petitioners ; for I mean to take it for granted, at least till I see your report, that you are on the side of humanity and justice ; and that I am not looking into the faces of those who can consent to kidnapping in this State, under any circumstances, or for any considerations whatsoever.

How extraordinary is an interview like this ! and how it will read in the history of the Commonwealth ! that we meet here gravely to deliberate whether it will be right, or proper, or safe, or constitutional, for

us to 'hide the outcast, and bewray not him that wandereth!'—or whether we ought not to co-operate with slave-hunters, and reduce their victims again to bondage!

'And what man, seeing this,
And having human feelings, does not blush,
And hang his head, to think himself a man!'

a Massachusetts man, under these circumstances? It implies great moral degradation on the part of the people of this Commonwealth hitherto,—great inhumanity of heart,—that, for seventy years, we have allowed the slave-hunter to course with impunity over our soil, from Cape Cod to Berkshire, and every where, at Plymouth Rock, in Faneuil Hall, on Bunker Hill, to seize his poor hunted victim, and drag him back to the hell of slavery. The time past must suffice for all this. The people, thank God, have resolved that it shall come to an end. No matter what this Legislature may say or do in the premises; if it be in opposition to the will of the people,—as those who sit in these seats are but the mere creatures of that will,—the people will 'send them to Coventry.'

When an appeal is made, at any time, any where, in behalf of justice and mercy, it carries with it every thing of argument, and rhetoric, and logic, and law; and no additional words are needed, in fact, to enforce it. If the object be just, humane, glorious, no multiplication of words can strengthen it. And this is the case presented to you in the multitudinous petitions lying on your table.

Let me say a word in regard to the petitioners as

a body. I know that, in this hall, a member of your own legislative body has undertaken, in advance, to pour contempt upon them ; to represent them as fanatics, incendiaries, and traitors ; to identify them with the class known as radical Abolitionists. Now, gentlemen, you have but to examine these petitions to see how utterly false is such a charge. They have been signed without distinction of party, and with no reference to the Anti-Slavery movement as such. I mean that men and women have put their names to the petition, as people rush out in common to put out a conflagration which is threatening to consume the city ; that there is no fanaticism in it ; that the persons who have signed it are not agreed in their views in regard to the best method of attacking slavery in our country, and of effecting its ultimate abolition. On many points we are divided ; but on this one point of making Massachusetts free soil to every human being planting his foot upon it, there is but one opinion among the people, and that opinion will prevail. No insult, no ridicule, no menace, on the part of any man or body of men, as against these petitioners, will avail any thing. I know the heart of the Commonwealth ; I know what are the pulsations of the people ; I know that if there be one thing, more than another, which unites them at this hour, cost what it may, it is this proposition to consecrate our soil to freedom by giving protection to every hunted fugitive slave who may come to us for protection. Whoever in this Legislature shall seek to vote down the prayer of these petitioners, will have an account to

settle with the people, and the people will have an account to settle with him; and none can doubt which way the balance will turn.

A member of this House, in the spirit of demagogueism, has raised the outcry, that to grant the prayer of this petition will be to come under the dictation of the Abolitionists; that the Abolitionists boast that whatever they decree is enacted by the Legislature; and you are summoned, by every feeling of self-respect and manhood, to stand your ground, and not be driven by such 'fanatical agitators.' Now, gentlemen, if this be true, that, hitherto, all that the Abolitionists have asked of the Legislature has been granted—and it is true—then one of two things is also true:—either that the Abolitionists of the Commonwealth are a large majority of the people, and so it is the popular and all-pervading sentiment of our State which is branded as fanaticism; or else that the Abolitionists, few in number, have always been so wise, so sagacious, so just, so humane, in every request they have yet made, that the people have been constrained to say 'Amen' to it. (Applause.) And this, gentlemen, is the simple fact. The Abolitionists, though held up as fanatics and madmen by priest and demagogue, have no fanaticism and no madness, either as to their object or the spirit which animates them. WE BELIEVE IN THE DECLARATION OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE; and all our fanaticism, from the beginning to this hour, has consisted in this—in meaning just what we say of that Declaration; but, alas! the nation is hypocritical and per-

fidious. We believe in the inalienable rights of man, and our crime has been, that we have refused to compromise these rights to accommodate any party or sect, or to sustain any law, constitution, or compact. We shall surely be vindicated at the court of conscience and at the tribunal of God, and the verdict of posterity will be,—*The Abolitionists were in the right, and the nation was in the wrong.*

Let us see, gentlemen, whether there is any cause for blushing, on the part of the Legislature, that it has ‘bowed to the dictation of the Abolitionists,’ and done certain things at ‘their command.’ We first asked the Legislature to record a strong and solemn protest against the existence of slavery in the District of Columbia—not a slave State, but territory owned by the whole nation, and under the exclusive jurisdiction of Congress, and for the government of which the nation is responsible. Our petition was promptly responded to by the Legislature, and it has no need to be ashamed of its action.

We asked, again, that there might be an expression of sentiment, in behalf of the State, against the inter-State slave trade, which presents more than the horrors of the foreign; for there are circumstances attending it which are peculiarly distressing and revolting; and the Legislature again responded to the appeal in strong language. Is this to be ashamed of?

Next, when the daring attempt was made to override the forms of constitutional law, and transcend the powers of the national government, in order to secure the extension of slavery by the annexation of

a foreign slave State to our own,—Texas,—we petitioned the Legislature to place on record the protest of Massachusetts against that lawless and wicked deed. It did so. Is it any thing to be ashamed of?

Again: when South Carolina and Louisiana undertook to imprison such of our colored seamen as were found in their ports,—not only to imprison, but also in various instances to send them to the auction-block, and sell them as slaves to pay their jail fees,—we called upon the Legislature to protest against this perfidious and oppressive treatment, and to send agents to those States to seek legal redress by taking an appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States. The request was complied with—with what success, gentlemen, you well know. But, surely, the Commonwealth has no reason to be ashamed of its course in this matter—only ashamed that it has been intimidated from making a fresh effort to protect the rights of our outraged colored citizens.

Again: In some sections of the State, especially in Boston, colored children were illegally excluded from the benefit of public schools, and compelled to herd together as a separate and despised caste. For a long time, the aristocracy of Boston was contumacious and defiant toward the popular feeling of the State on this point, and resolved that there should be no blending of white and colored children in the common schools of the city. We asked the Legislature to decree, in unmistakable terms, the abolition of all complexional distinctions in the schools. It did so: and in Boston, to-day, the blackest child sits quietly and hono-

rably by the side of the whitest. Gentlemen, there is no cause for regret or shame in this act.

Again : the protest of the Legislature has been requested, and granted, against that 'bill of abominations,' the Fugitive Slave Law, the passage of which excited a thrill of horror throughout the civilized world ; and also against the infamous Dred Scott decision, and the swindling Kansas and Nebraska act. What true son of Massachusetts has cause to blush at what has been done in these particulars ?

The last thing we have asked, what we are now asking, is, that every fugitive slave coming to this State shall be protected, and that no person from the South may be allowed to hunt him on our soil as though he were a wild beast. All the other requests have been granted, and is this to be denied ? Is there any doubt with regard to the public opinion on this subject ? Do the people still rule in the Old Bay State ? I take it they do ; and I affirm that they are ready for this measure. They want no delay, no paltering, no dodging ; but they want a decree, simple, plain, explicit, which shall protect every fugitive slave coming within our borders. I trust, gentlemen, that your report will be unanimous, and that you will bring in a bill which shall be most effectual for this purpose. (Applause.)

Gentlemen, the petition implies that Massachusetts now allows slave-hunting on her soil as constitutional. This is either true or it is not. If it be true, then the people of Massachusetts are a commonwealth of kidnappers by constitutional agreement. Hence, every

man who does not protest against the deed is to be put into the category of kidnappers. He may be a gentlemanly man, but he is a gentlemanly *kidnapper*. He may be a Republican, but he is a Republican *kidnapper*. He may be a Democrat, but he is a Democratic *kidnapper*. He may be a Presbyterian, Methodist, or Unitarian, but he is a Methodist, Unitarian, or Presbyterian *kidnapper*. Every man who is not for putting an end to this nefarious business becomes an accomplice in it, and, of course, reveals his true character. He shows that, in that direction, and to that extent, his heart has been turned to stone, and that he is willing to trample upon the law of God, and disregard all the claims of bleeding humanity. If it be true that slave-hunters are permitted to go through the Commonwealth, and seize their victims wherever they can find them, then it is time, and the people now say it is time, to put an end to this forever. But if it is not true that there is any law binding us, any contract compelling us to allow this, then, of course, it is the greater shame to us that we have allowed it so long, and there can be no valid objection to the passage of the desired decree. We stand here in the name of the living God to say, that no matter what your parchments may be, or how many contracts you may have made to seize the fugitive, to 'beware the wanderer,' the law of God is paramount over all ; and your iniquitous parchments are to be given to the consuming fire, your unrighteous pledges are not to be kept, and justice is to be maintained at all hazards. 'Your covenant with death shall be annulled, and

your agreement with hell shall not stand.' If we have made any such covenant, or entered into any such agreement, shame to us that we have kept it so long ; it will be to our honor and glory when we trample it beneath our feet.

I cannot, gentlemen, place the same construction upon the Constitution, respecting the rendition of fugitive slaves, which my respected friend Mr. Sewall has done. I cannot plead that it is not in the bond to give up the fugitive slave. It is for those who can to do so ; for myself, I cannot outface this nation, and say, that, for seventy years, it has never understood its own Constitution in this particular. I believe that Massachusetts consented, with her eyes open, and for the sake of making a union with the South possible, to allow the slave-hunter to come here, and take his prey ; and I would not spend one moment in attempting to argue, on the words of the Constitution, that we have never agreed to do any such thing. I believe that the intent of a bargain is the bargain, whatever may be the language used, and I would not try to get rid of an obligation, however unjust, by a false interpretation of the instrument. I believe Washington, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Jay and Marshall, and all those who made the Constitution, and the people who adopted it, understood what they were about. They knew that they agreed to allow a slave representation in Congress ; yet the words are not to be found in the Constitution. They intelligently and deliberately agreed that the foreign slave-trade should be prosecuted for the term of twenty

years, without Congressional intervention; yet they did not allow the term 'slave trade' to be inserted in the Constitution. They also understandingly agreed that slaves who should escape from their masters into other States, should be given up. Why, gentlemen, the Fugitive Slave Law itself, which creates such universal disgust and horror, does not contain the words runaway slave, or slaveholder, or slave-catcher; in its language, it is entirely unexceptionable. *It is the language of the Constitution of the United States!*—What a waste of time and effort it would be to argue, from the phraseology of that nefarious law, that it was never designed by Congress to refer to fugitive slaves! Enough that, for seventy years, all the Courts, all the Legislatures, all the Congresses, and all the people, have understood these compromises of the Constitution in precisely the same way, and pronounced them obligatory. It is too late, therefore, to get up a new and unwarrantable construction of the Constitution, in order to justify us in doing right and obeying God. All I have to say is, as one holding loyalty to God to be paramount in all cases, I care not though every word in the Constitution be for slavery, or every sentence an agreement on our part to stand by it. In that case, it is all null and void, and a crime of the deepest dye for us to carry it out; and so I stand here on the ground of eternal justice, and appeal to the law of the living God, and ask you to do likewise.

Gentlemen, the cry of 'treason' has been raised in this hall. 'Treason!' I thought treason was some-

thing very plainly defined by the Constitution. I understand it to be an overt act—giving aid and comfort to the enemy in time of war—taking up arms against the government. It is no treason in which we are engaged; it is loyalty to Heaven. It is only treason to the devil and all his works. (Loud applause.) I know they said, of old, when they perpetrated that crime which has shocked all generations since the event took place, and the remembrance of which will go down to the end of the world, causing a universal shudder,—I know, when they nailed Jesus to the cross between two thieves, they justified themselves by the plea, ‘WE HAVE A LAW, and *by that law* he ought to die; his blood be on us, and on our children.’ But I know that they were none the less guilty on that ground, and that their pretended regard for the law was loathsome hypocrisy and horrible impiety. And I maintain that, in view of all the light we enjoy, and living as we do eighteen hundred years after those old dark days of Judaism, it is, before God, a greater crime in us to allow a slave to be carried off from the soil of Massachusetts, than it was in the Jews to allow Jesus to be crucified. We have incomparably more light: and guilt must be in proportion to the amount of light enjoyed and resisted. For myself, I would rather take my chance hereafter with those who put the spear into the side of Jesus, than with those who in this day, with the gospel of Christ in one hand, and the Declaration of Independence in the other, consent to allow a human being to be transformed into a beast, and to be carried off from our soil to stripes and bondage.

How is it, gentlemen, that latitude and longitude make such a wide moral difference respecting acts that are essentially alike? By the law of the land, you know that whoever seizes a man on the coast of Africa, and makes or helps to make him a slave, is adjudged guilty of piracy. True, the law is now a dead letter; for it is a Slave Oligarchy that rules us; still, it remains the recorded judgment of this nation, that every one who enslaves a native-born African is guilty of piracy. Now, 'a man's a man for a' that.' Are we then to consent to be pirates, by joining in the chase, and hunting down those who come to us for safety and protection? Allow me to give you an account of the latest case of an escaped fugitive slave which has taken place in this State. I will read you the narrative, as taken down from the fugitive's own lips:—

'On the 4th of December, 1858, I secreted myself on board the brig William Purington, of Boston, Capt. James L. Bryant, then lying at the wharf in Wilmington, N. C. Three days afterwards, the brig sailed for Boston. About three days out, I was discovered by the mate of the brig, who informed Capt. Bryant that a runaway slave was on board; whereupon the captain, in a great passion, swore terrible oaths at me. He threatened to blow my brains out, and to send me back to Wilmington, the first chance he could get. I had forty-five or fifty dollars in specie tied up round my body:—the mate searched me, and took the money from me, in the presence of the captain. I asked the captain to give it back to me, several times, but he only swore at me, and refused, and has never restored it to me. He ordered me into the booby hatch, which was filled mostly with barrels of spirits of turpentine, rosin, &c., to punish me,

as I believe. I could not lie down or walk there, but could only sit upon the barrels, for several days and nights. The air was so close there, and so impregnated with the fumes of the spirits of turpentine, that I became almost entirely exhausted. I could neither stand nor walk. I told the mate I should soon die there; he saw my condition; then the captain ordered me on the open deck, and forbid my going to any other part of the brig, day or night. There I recovered from the bad effects of the spirits of turpentine. I could not sleep upon deck, the weather was so cold; my feet and hands were so badly frost-bitten, that I am yet (Feb. 25th) unable to work, and under the doctor's care.

From the day that I was discovered in the brig, the captain directed that only bread and water should be given to me. He said that was too good for me; but when the crew caught a porpoise, I was allowed some of that. I was treated in a brutal manner, both by the captain and mate. My sufferings were terrible in the booby hatch, and on the deck.

The brig put into Holmes' Hole, and lay there several days. I was obliged to keep upon the deck there. I endeavored to get on shore while in that harbor, but could not succeed.

On the evening of Dec. 26, we arrived at the outer harbor of Boston. A pilot-boat came along-side, but the captain refused to take the pilot, saying that he knew the way in. Soon after, he got aground in the Narrows. All hands were then called, and great exertions were made to get the brig afloat; but they could not succeed, as the tide was falling. All hands worked till midnight, and then turned in. I had worked as hard as the rest to help get the brig off, but there was no rest for me. The captain ordered me to remain on deck, work the pump, and keep her free. At daylight, I let myself down into the ship channel, and swam to Lovell's island, a distance of about two hundred feet, as near as I could judge. I

then travelled over to the other side of the island, entirely out sight of the brig;—there, in that cold morning, I kept constantly walking to and fro, to keep from freezing, for about two hours, when I spied a small sail boat, and held up my pocket handkerchief as a signal of distress. The boat neared the island; I hailed them, and begged them to take me on board. They did so, and took me up to the city, and landed me upon Commercial wharf.’

Such is the narrative. I know nothing personally of the captain or mate of that vessel, but from this representation, which I have no doubt is strictly true, they are evidently devoid of all the feelings of our common humanity; and the last thing I should wish to do would be to touch the hand of either of them. But, gentlemen, what a case is this! The victim, in our own harbor, in the wintry month of December, throws himself overboard, at the risk of drowning or freezing, in order to effect his escape; for he well understood that he might be taken back to slavery, even from Massachusetts. The question is, shall he be protected among us; or shall we join with that captain and mate, be as inhuman and brutal as they, seize him, and send him back to the South? Massachusetts says, ‘No; God forbid! Let him remain.’ (Applause.)

Gentlemen, let those who raise the cry of disloyalty to the Union, in disparagement of the friends of humanity in this Commonwealth, go to the South, where they belong. They are feverishly anxious, forsooth, that the law should be scrupulously kept, and the compact carefully observed, when fugitive

slaves are to be caught; but as to the outlawry of our colored citizens at the South, and the ruthless violation of our own constitutional rights in that section, they have no complaint to make, no censure to bestow. Let them go and seek a residence in Georgia or Alabama. They have no sympathy with the free spirit of Massachusetts, are perfidious to her highest interests, and approvingly see her insulted and dishonored by the entire South. I recommend one member of this House, who represents not the Commonwealth but Carolina, to lose no time in taking the cars southward; and if he is anxious to see the Constitution maintained, let him there begin the work of rebuking and exposing those, who, for the vilest purposes, are ever disregarding its most sacred provisions, before raising the senseless cry of 'treason! treason!' from these seats, against those who are true to the principles of freedom.

Talk of 'our glorious Union'! THERE IS NO UNION. The free States are conquered provinces—that is all. We are living under a usurpation, bold, audacious, bloody, and the forms of government have become mockeries. There is no Union; and the man who throws up his cap and cries, 'The Union forever!' is morally in a condition to be sent to a mad-house, and have a strait-jacket put upon him. There is no Union—none, I mean, for free souls and manly hearts. There is a Union for slaveholders, slave-traders, slave-speculators, slave-hunters, and their Northern pimps and allies; but none for honest, manly, freedom-loving spirits in this land. Take the

last Presidential election, which proves all that I say in regard to our living under a usurpation. James Buchanan is the President of the United States! Just as legally and constitutionally so as Louis Napoleon of France. We have had no constitutional Presidential election. When, in all the slave States, the slaveholders made it perilous to the life of any man to say—‘I am in favor of the election of John C. Fremont’—when, in all the South, it was not possible to hold a Convention in favor of Mr. Fremont, or to nominate and advocate an electoral ticket bearing his name, except at great personal hazard—when border-ruffianism actually took possession of every ballot-box at the South, to secure the election of James Buchanan—was not that the overthrow of the very forms of Republican government, and the triumph of high-handed usurpation? I understand a constitutional election to be this: entire freedom of choice for all parties, without limitation, and without peril—the recognized right to hold meetings, employ speakers, and use all necessary means to operate upon public sentiment, in order to success. This was the freedom accorded to the Democratic party throughout the country. During the campaign, distinguished Southern slaveholders were every where at the North, at all Democratic gatherings of local importance, advocating the claims of its Presidential candidate. They found their way to Bunker Hill, into Faneuil Hall, and down to Plymouth Rock, declaiming against impartial freedom, and hotly opposing the election of Mr. Fremont; but who thought of putting them in

bodily peril? Who, in all the North, among the most heated partisans of Mr. Fremont, thought of saying, 'Whoever dares to avow himself in favor of the election of James Buchanan, the candidate of the slave oligarchy, let him be lynched, or driven south of Mason and Dixon's line'? Nobody. On the Democratic side, there was liberty of speech, of locomotion, and of choice, North and South, to the utmost extent. But what Republican ventured down South to advocate the claims of Mr. Fremont? Why did not Mr. Wilson, or Mr. Hale, or Mr. Seward, or any other distinguished leader or advocate of the Republican party go? *Because they knew if they went, they would never come back again!* Is this the enjoyment of constitutional liberty?

Besides all this, even Southern men,—not Abolitionists, not hostile to slavery in spirit or purpose on Southern soil,—for simply avowing their preference for Mr. Fremont, (as in the case of Prof. Hedrick, of the University of North Carolina, Mr. Underwood of Virginia, and other highly respectable citizens,) were compelled to seek safety in flight, and have not deemed it advisable to return to their homes and firesides, even to this day. In one instance, a friend of Mr. Fremont was shot dead in the presence of his wife, and she obliged to flee for her life. Under such circumstances, this is not a constitutional government, but a bloody usurpation; and a brute-force slave oligarchy reigns over us.

Gentlemen, I know what the plea of the South is, and I admit its full force. — They put our colored citi-

zens into jail, they send them to the auction block, they drive them to unrequited toil as slaves on their plantations; and they make you and I outlaws, if we attempt to talk about freedom. Their excuse is the old one, 'Necessity—the tyrant's plea.' They say, and they say truly—'We do the best we can under the circumstances. If we should permit the free colored citizens of the North to come among our slaves, they will whisper of liberty, and incite them to insurrection. We regret that we are driven to this course; we know it is illegal and unconstitutional; but we cannot maintain our slave system without it, and self-preservation is the first law of nature.' And again, with regard to the white citizens of the North who are Abolitionists, they say—'It will never do for them to come down South, and avow their anti-slavery sentiments; for if they do, they will operate upon the non-slaveholding whites, and ultimately our slaves will be taken out of our hands, and this we cannot permit.' I admit the force of their plea as slaveholders; and it shows the folly and madness of attempting to form a union between elements that can never coalesce. All the trouble between the North and the South has been to this hour, and will be to the 'bitter end,' not because of a difference of soil and climate, but because of institutions and ideas which are utterly antagonistical; because, in one part of the land, man is man, and in the other, he is reduced by another to the condition of a mere perishable piece of property. So that, when Senator Seward said in his Rochester speech, this anti-slavery

movement is no fanaticism, no ebullition of transient feeling, no party device, but grows out of the nature of things—is, because it cannot help being—is, because the nation must be either all for freedom or all for slavery, or else there will be perpetual trouble and conflict—he recognized the simplest truth in the universe. Our fathers, in framing the Constitution, were led in their blindness to undertake to do that which it is not in the power of God to consummate,—for God cannot reconcile good and evil, light and darkness; and no power can put into the same union liberty and slavery, free men and slaves, without confusion and strife. We are driven to the wall, therefore, by the South, in regard to this subject. If we allow slaves to be hunted here, ‘why is not slavery everywhere right?’ asks the South. ‘If you are ready to give us your aid and support and protection in holding four millions of slaves, why not allow us to have twenty millions, if we can get them? Where is your conscience—where your morality—what are your ideas of right and wrong? What is damnable in Massachusetts, morally, must be damnable in Virginia; and you must either go against slavery everywhere, or admit that slavery is right everywhere.’ Here, I say, the South has us in the argument, and drives us to the wall, because we occupy a foolish, inconsistent and criminal position.

You will be admonished, doubtless, by those who are unscrupulous in their devotion to Southern interests, that you have taken an oath to sustain the Constitution of the United States. Well, gentlemen,

what is that oath? Does it bind you to give up the fugitive slave, or to consent that he shall be hunted on Massachusetts soil with impunity? If it does, put that oath under your feet, and dare not carry it out, as you regard your own souls' salvation. That oath is not binding upon you for a moment. But there is an oath which harmonizes with the law of God; which is on the side of humanity and justice; and which you have taken upon your souls to see fulfilled, as pertaining to the rights of man. It is this:

ARTICLE 1. All men are born free and equal, and have certain natural, essential, and inalienable rights: among which may be reckoned the right of enjoying and defending their lives and liberties; that of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property; in fine, that of seeking and obtaining their safety and happiness.

The oath lies upon your souls, to-day, gentlemen, to maintain these rights. It is an oath that you can and must carry out; an oath that the people of this State are resolved shall be carried out; and if this Legislature will not do it, another one will be chosen which will assuredly stereotype public sentiment into law.

I have referred to the plea of the South, that she is shut up to the terrible necessity of disregarding all her relations and agreements with us, in order to perpetuate her slave system. Now, I would have nothing done by way of vindictive retaliation; but I would say, as the very worst thing I would have done to the South, for the atrocious injustice she has done to us

and our citizens,—I would say, in the language of Whittier—

‘Have they wronged us? Let us then
 Render back nor threats nor prayers ;
Have they chained our free-born men ?
 LET US UNCHAIN THEIRS !’ (Applause.)

Pass the law, then ; not in anger, nor by way of retaliation—no, but that Massachusetts, in this respect, may stand at least by the side of Austria ;—Austria, which proclaims that the moment any slave, from any part of the world, shall touch the deck of an Austrian ship, or any part of the Austrian soil, his chains shall burst asunder, and he shall be protected against recapture or harm by the whole power of the nation. Let the old Bay State try to reach the position of Austria ! If the Courts shall nullify what you may enact—it is surmised that they will, but that is to beg the question, and we ought not hastily to conclude that our judges are ravening wolves—but if they should do so, you will have done your duty. You are not responsible for the action of the Courts, and the people will settle the matter with them.

Gentlemen, I conclude by saying that all opposition to this movement will be unavailing, because it is ‘of heaven, not of men.’ It is the conscience of the people of the Commonwealth in insurrection against satanic wickedness. The Anti-Slavery struggle is for the freedom of man, without distinction of race or color. It is God who inspires and guides it, who bears it upward and onward ; and it is impossible for Him to be overcome or vanquished. No matter who the

man may be that shall try his hand against this movement, he will fall in the end. No matter what party may attempt to put it down; that party will be dashed in pieces. It is a rock; and 'whosoever shall fall thereon shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder.'

' Tyrants! in vain ye trace the wizard ring!
In vain ye limit mind's unwearied spring:
What! can ye lull the winged winds asleep,
Arrest the rolling world, or chain the deep?
No! the wild wave contemns your sceptred hand,
It rolled not back when Canute gave command!'

I ask you, gentlemen, to join with the people in crying out, in thunder tones, that all the nation may hear, in the language of our own Lowell—

'From being slave, or making slave,
God save the Commonwealth!'

(Loud applause.)